



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

of all entitled "Cecco d'Ascoli and Dante." Cecco d'Ascoli gives us many proofs of his relations with Dante, but the latter does not even give an indication of "having known, loved or hated the Ascolan." It is necessary, therefore, to examine the cause of Dante's silence. "This could not have been due to ignorance of what Cecco was thinking and doing," for the latter was a personage surrounded by the admiration of scholars, by the envy of colleagues and by the favor of the great. Dante could not despise a rival who stood far above the common herd. In answer, Castelli says:

"Io sono convinto che l'Alighieri forse pienamente consapevole della superba impresa che Cecco d'Ascoli aveva ideata e veniva faticosamente compiendo; sono convinto, che, pure ammirando in cuor suo la generosità del titanico tentativo, deplorava quello sciupio di forze in opera vana, perchè fatta in condizioni disperate. Per questo, anzichè impugnare le armi invincibili, che suole adoprare contro i maligni e i vigliacchi, egli si restringe all'ufficio di compiangere ed ammonire l'uomo, fuorviato dalla ebbrietà del sapere, che aveva accolto nel cuore la tentazione di donare al mondo un secondo poema."

To follow all the arguments in proof of this statement would lead us too far. A careful reading of the book before us, however, does not convince us that its writer has quite succeeded in freeing Cecco d'Ascoli of the "hereditary prejudice" that has beset him. It is doubtful whether Gaspary, had he lived to read this book, would have changed his opinion given above, in any essential feature. But Signor Castelli's book is a very important contribution to the history of Italian thought in the Middle Ages, and no one can read it without profit. The author is deeply imbued with the spirit of his subject, his fairness is everywhere evident, and he writes in a style that is delightfully clear and attractive. In conclusion, after expressing the opinion that only after the entire text of the 'Acerba' has been critically re-established and the scattered fragments of Cecco d'Ascoli's scientific and literary works have been gathered together, can a true judgment of him be formed, the author says:

"Then will the figure of Cecco, purified and redeemed, rise forth, entire and majestic, like

the shade of Farinata from his fiery tomb; then will he rise from the blow that envy has dealt him to admonish us, that if it be the highest glory to die for one's fatherland, to die for science typifies the liberation and the glory of mankind."

HUGO A. RENNERT.

University of Pennsylvania.

ENGLISH VERSIFICATION.

English Versification for the Use of Students.

By Rev. JAMES C. PARSONS. Boston and New York: Leach, Shewell, and Sarborn, Copyright, 1891, xiii, 162 pp.

THE teachers of English literature in High Schools and Colleges have long been waiting for this little book,—though I am decidedly late in saying so.

The treatment is frankly dogmatic. Most instructors do not have the time necessary to consider the subject inductively and historically, and the scholars already have some conception of the nature of English verse.

Professor J. Schipper in *Englische Studien* (xviii, 147-150) has given to this book an abundance of blame, interspersed with a sparing amount of faint praise. In spite of all flaws, however, I believe that the little work deserves hearty commendation. The treatment of the subject seems to be, for the most part, clear, concise, and adequate. I have not subjected the book to that "trial by fire," the test of the class-room, but I judge the language to be level to the comprehension of the ordinary Freshman.

Schipper finds the book wanting in a logical arrangement of the material. Though Part i. is entitled "Principles," and Part ii, "Forms," some of the common *forms* of the line and stanza are discussed in Part i. From a purely practical point of view, however, the order of treatment does not seem to be a bad one. Chapter v has a somewhat blind title, "Variety in Metre." The subject treated is *The Stanza*.

The following passage in Mr. Parsons's preface does him injustice:

"The controversy of scholars as to the degree in which *quantity* prevails as a basis for English rhythm has been studiously avoided. It seems sufficient to follow the prevalent

habit of our best poets, as evidenced in their utterance and their works, of assigning to *accent* the determining characteristic of English verse."

Elsewhere in his book our author shows a clear comprehension of the fact that accent can no more be "the determining characteristic of English verse" than it can be "the determining characteristic" of music. I appeal from Philip conscientiously attempting to follow authorities, to Philip uttering his own uncorrupted judgments. Though the quantity of many syllables in English is very variable (that is, depends much upon the connection), yet the quantity of any syllable in a given line is always a matter of importance. Otherwise, the general time-equivalence of the successive feet will not be observed. The line, —

"While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced
neighboring ocean,"

uses *rocky* as rhythmically equivalent to *deep-voiced*. There is no natural "rest" in the reading to help out the defective quantity of "rocky," and the result is an unrhythmical line. "Evangeline" is a most beautiful poem — but not because of its unrhythmical lines.

Lanier makes the following extreme assertion concerning the quantity of English syllables:

"It is the English habit to utter each word, whether prose or verse, in such a manner that the sounds of which it is composed bear to each other definite and simple relations in point of time. By 'definite and simple relations' is meant the relations either of equality or of proportion according to the small numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc."¹

My own sense of hearing is not accurate enough to verify this statement. I should simply say that, after the rhythm of a poem is clearly established to the ear, the reader instinctively accommodates the quantity (time) of the syllables to the demands of the rhythm. In so far as it is difficult to do this, the rhythm is bad. It should also be remembered, as I have said elsewhere, that

"lyric poetry is that form of verse which is most nearly allied to music in the exactness and the prominence of its rhythm. In free blank-verse . . . we have frequent omissions of the rhythmical accent even in measures that

are filled with sound, frequent displacements of the accent, and a bewildering variety of equivalent forms of the measure; and even the fundamental rhythm itself, which is clearly heard through all interruptions, is not marked off to the ear with the same exactness as in lyric verse."²

I would omit the words put in parentheses in the following definition: "Rhythm, in verse, is (caused by) the occurrence of similar phenomena of sound at regular intervals" (p. 1). In the same way *produced by* would be omitted from the definition of English poetical rhythm. A *syllable*, a conception of fundamental importance, is nowhere defined.

The definition of rhyme on p. 3 would include end-rhyme, assonance, alliteration, and various other phenomena; that on p. 43 would include only the first two of these. The characteristics of "*proper* rhymes," given on the same page, apply only to end-rhymes. On pp. 3 and 51 alliteration is given so broad a definition that it would include all the phenomena just assigned to rhyme.

I would suggest that the term *general rhyme* be applied to all the phenomena of *sound-repetition and sound similarity*. Under the general rhyme of a passage of verse would be included the repetition in that passage of any speech-sound or sound-group, or the absence of such repetition; also, the general predominance of any class of sounds, or the absence of such predominance. The following terms would all be more specific: *alliteration* (the repetition of a sound at the beginning of neighboring accented syllables), *general-alliteration* (the general predominance in a passage of any consonant or class of consonants), *Old-English alliteration*, *rhyme* ('International Dict.,' definition 2), *assonance* ('Internatl.,' def. 2), *general assonance* (the predominance in a passage of any vowel-sound or class of vowel-sounds). For example, the following couplet is the conclusion of a general assonance in which the prominent vowel is *ē*:

"Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear;
And Sport leap'd up, and seiz'd his beechen spear."
(*"The Passions,"* Collins).

I have previously suggested the terms *general alliteration* and *general assonance*

¹ 'Science of Eng. Verse,' p. 60.

² 'Lanier Memorial,' p. 41.

(*Andover Rev.*, Mch., 1887). Professor Sylvester's term *syzygy* has the same meaning as the first of these, but seems to me very awkward and unpleasant. The importance of having a good name for this phenomenon is very great. Professor Sylvester says, "Verse without syzygy is no more verse than shoddy is cloth."

The facts about alliteration in Old-English poetry are much better stated by Parsons on p. 51 than on p. 79. He seems to be following different authorities in the two passages. He talks of *lines* in one place and of *couplets* in the other. The first long line of 'Piers Plowman' is printed as a line on p. 52, and as a "couplet" on p. 82.

I will mention some small oversights. On p. 5, in the passage from Emerson, "thou carvest" should be "it carves." In the middle of p. 64, "not" should be "no." A line of poetry receives a wrong rhythmic interpretation on p. 17. The entire stanza is given on p. 37.—It seems wrong to interpret a seven-syllable trochaic line of four accents as "trochaic trimeter with an added syllable" (p. 35). On p. 18 we have a "dactylic tetrameter with a monosyllable instead of the final dactyl," and immediately after a "dactylic pentameter with an added syllable." The lines are;

"Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea."

"Dance the elastic dactyls with musical cadences on."

Of course, the second of these is a hexameter if the first is a tetrameter. In general, I think, the impression of a line is determined by the number of accented syllables that it contains.

Parsons goes too far in making the *amphibrach* and *amphimacer* distinct and important feet in English verse. The measures which are thus denominated are simply expressive varieties of the anapaest and dactyl, and these strange terms in *amphi-* are only an encumbrance. The line which Parsons cites on p. 10 as composed of amphibrachs, is given again on p. 16 as a line of anapaests. The lines on p. 21 should be interpreted, in accordance with the context, as anapestic, and not as made up of amphibrachs and amphimacers, though the expressive caesuras fall somewhat peculiarly. The lines are:

"I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three,"
"Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place."

In explanation of the common substitution of a trochee for an iambus, our author says very suggestively:

"This occurs most easily and properly after a pause . . . The true explanation may therefore be, that it is like the effort made to catch the step, where one is 'falling in' to marching time" (p. 21).

This explains why the substitution occurs just after a pause; but the reason why there is any substitution at all seems to be a desire for variety of effect; usually, in the best poetry, in addition to the mere desire for variety, some peculiarity of the idea demands the substitution in the interest of expressiveness. The unexpected accent at the beginning of line 10 of 'Paradise Lost,' "Rose out of chaos," is highly expressive. We see Creation spring into being at the word of the Almighty.

Historical matter might well be introduced into the book at many points. Indeed, a brief sketch of the history of English verse would add to the value of the book. Such elisions as "th' immortal powers" (p. 22) are an especial mark of Pope and his school.

The 'International Dictionary' defines *anacrusis* more broadly than does Parsons, and a term is needed for the general phenomenon.

Parsons does not say clearly that a "rest" can take the place of an entire foot or entire feet. The third line of "Christabel" should probably be read either as ending with two silent feet, or as having one silent foot in the middle and one at the end; and perhaps all would conceive of the fifth line as ending with one silent foot,—though this pause merges into the long pause that marks the end of the verse-paragraph;³

"'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock,
Tu-whit!—Tu-whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew."

In the same way, we fill out the time of the short lines in "Marmion" with a pause.

The caesura should be more sharply defined as a cessation of the verse-movement, in

³ See Lanier, 'Sci. of E. V.' 197.

contrast to the *rest*, a pause that counts in the verse-movement.

Parsons utters dangerous doctrine when he says:

"The mute consonant *t* requires more effort than the liquid *l*, and so the one comes to be used in the word *lay*, and the other in the word *tug*" (p. 62).

Pray, how does the *l* "come to be used" in *leap*? and the *t* in *tame*?

Gummere⁴ gives a much better definition of Hovering Accent than does Parsons (p. 143). Parsons illustrates Wrenched Accent by a line that most readers do not wrench (p. 144).

Schipper thinks that something should be said by Parsons about the various forms of the *Schweifreimstrophe*. Since Burns uses a *Schweifreimstrophe* in many of his Epistles, in the "Mousie," the "Daisy," the "Bard's Epitaph," etc., the point is well taken. We very much need a technical term here. Why not call this favorite verse-form of the Scottish poet a "tail-rhyme stanza"? The name though not elegant, is highly expressive. A clear idea of the "tail-rhyme stanza," and of its history in English verse down to Shakespeare can be obtained in a few moments by looking up the references under *Schweifreim*, *S. strophe*, etc., in the index to Paul's newly-completed 'Grundriss der germanischen Philologie.'

Chaucer's seven-line stanza, the well-known *Rime-Royal*, should not be called the "Rhythm Royal" (p. 38). If a new name were admissible, "Stanza Royal" would be the better term.

But a truce to fault-finding. Mr. Parsons has written the text-book that many teachers needed, and its defects can easily be remedied in a later edition.

A. H. TOLMAN.

University of Chicago.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SPANISH GRAMMAR.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—In the April number of the MOD. LANG. NOTES appears a review of my Spanish Grammar signed by C. Carroll Marden (Johns

⁴ 'Hand-book of Poetics,' p. 142.

Hopkins University). Would you kindly allow me space in the NOTES for the following remarks on Mr. Marden's notice?

1. The grammar proper of my brief presentation of the essentials of the Spanish language is divided into two parts: namely, 1. the treatment of forms (forty-eight pages); and 2. the syntax (thirty-four pages). Mr. M. might, as his own preference, have objected to such a division. But, instead, he singles out gratuitously part one (with exercises) "as the working part of the grammar," and then criticizes it for lacking certain important syntactical statements actually found in the syntax, and this without a hint—save in a single instance—of their occurrence there. Thus the rules for the position of adjectives and for the use of the possessive, pointed out as missing, are found in their proper places §§ 113, 60-63, 121-124. Every one of the syntactical rules (altogether nine!) briefly stated by needed anticipation in the exercises, and according to Mr. M. found there *only*, are, as a fact, given more fully with examples in their proper places in the syntax.

2. Mr. M. wants more than "one" model verb (he suggests four or five) under each of the subordinate classes of regular verbs. In the first place, two are actually given under each of classes a. and b., and then anything more would be as superfluous as to give more than one type-verb for each class of ordinary regular verbs. How far the proposed repetition of the same principle would aid the student in recognizing several hundred verbs, (more than three hundred without counting compounds of extant simple verbs) is easily perceived. Real aid in this respect is afforded the learner by a short description of the verbs of each class. A list of the verbs might have been added, but as no such list is or ought to be committed to memory, I concluded—as I think rightly—that for reference the student would be better helped by one alphabetical list at the end of the book, than by four in different places within the book.

3. "The regular verbs," says Mr. M., "are arranged with no attempt to classify them according to their irregularities." Not only are they classified according to their irregularities (with references, besides, to the phonetic explanation of irregular forms) in §§ 86-87, but